

FORT BELVOIR

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

Etiquette

Accents

Viola Jimulla

Dress Code

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USAG EEO OFFICE FORT BELVOIR 2012

Equal Employment Opportunity

Newsletter

VOLUME III

FALL EDITION 2012



Olga Bryant
EEO Director

Disability Awareness simply means educating people with the required knowledge to perform a job or task. Knowing that discrimination is unlawful is not enough, it is important for the workforce to be aware of the broader need for a variety of people with different disabilities, and the correct language and etiquette to communicate effectively.

Disability Awareness

The Disability Awareness Month began in 1945 when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and renamed it to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month." The United States Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy assumed

responsibility for NDEAM in 2001.

The Department of Labor announced this year's theme, *"A Strong Workforce is an Inclusive Workforce: What Can YOU Do?"* The theme promotes the benefits of a diverse workforce that includes workers with disabilities, who represent a highly skilled talent pool of people.

Please join the Fort Belvoir Equal Employment Opportunity Office (EEO) in commemorating the many and various contributions of America's skillful workers with disabilities. Not just in the month of October, but throughout the year.



Positive Language

Positive language empowers. When writing or speaking about people with disabilities, it is important to put the person first.

Group designations such as "the blind," "the retarded" or "the disabled" are inappropriate because they do not reflect the individuality, equality or dignity of people with disabilities.

Further, words like "normal person" imply that the person with a disability isn't normal, whereas "person without a disability" is descriptive but not negative.

Etiquette considered appropriate when interacting with people with disabilities is based primarily on respect and courtesy.

Tips for Communicating

- Use the word disability rather than handicapped or cripple.
- When introduced to a person with a disability, it is appropriate to offer to shake hands. People with limited hand use or who wear an artificial limb can usually shake hands. (Shaking hands with the left hand is an acceptable greeting.)
- If you offer assistance, wait until the offer is accepted. Then listen to or ask for instructions.
- Avoid negative words like victim or sufferer.

- Avoid saying a person confined to a wheelchair. The wheelchair provides mobility and is liberating rather than confining to a person with a mobility impairment.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions when you're unsure of what to do.
- If possible, put yourself at the wheelchair user's eye level.
- Do not lean on a wheelchair or any other assistive device.
- Never patronize people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the head or shoulder.
- Do not assume the individual wants to be pushed —ask first.
- Offer assistance if the individual appears to be having difficulty opening a door.
- If you telephone the individual, allow the phone to ring longer than usual to allow extra time for the person to reach the telephone.

Remember

- Relax.
- Treat the individual with dignity, respect and courtesy.
- Listen to the individual.
- Offer assistance but do not insist or be offended if your offer is not accepted.
- When walking with a person who walks slower than you,

walk with the person, not in front of him/her.

- Consider prosthetic devices as you would a leg/foot or hand/arm.
- Don't be sensitive about using words like "running" or "walking."
- Instead of normal, say a person without disabilities. Many People with disabilities consider themselves healthy and normal.
- Instead of handicapped parking say accessible parking.

Source: United States Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)

by Karen Ruby, EEO Specialist
Fort Belvoir



Diversity

Accents

There are two kinds of accent. One is first language accent, or variation in the use of one's native language. Variations may be related to the geographical area or cultural group to which one belongs. Examples include a Maine accent, an Appalachian accent, a Jewish accent, and Black English. Lippi-Green (1997) shares an example, John Kennedy's Boston variety of English. He once noted that Bostonian's "saved all the r's *paaking aa caas in Haavaad yaad* [parking our cars in Harvard yard] in order to put them on the end of *idear* [idea]." Every native speaker of English speaks with a first language accent.

The second kind of accent is a second language accent that occurs when a native speaker of a different language learns to speak English. Accent is the breakthrough of the native language phonology into the English. We may say that a person has a Dutch accent because the phonologies of Dutch influence the learner's pronunciation of U.S. English.

The level to which a person can substitute one accent for another is severely dependent upon the age at which the second language is learned (Lenneberg, 1967). While children can often learn a second or third language with ease, the same is not true for many adults. A number of scientists postulate that at some point during adolescence we move past the developmental stage for language acquisition (Johnson & Newport, 1989; Lenneberg, 1967; Long, 1990). A person's distinctive intonation and phonological features (accent) are hard-wired in the brain and are difficult to change. It is unrealistic to expect a person who learned to speak English as an adult to sound just like a native English speaker, regardless as to commitment, intelligence, and motivation.

It says linguistic characteristics are a component of national origin. And, as America becomes an increasingly multicultural nation, it is to be hoped that we will become increasingly skilled in communicating with those who speak English with various accents as well as tolerant in our attitudes toward all accents. Attitudes toward accents can have positive or negative implications for how successful we are in working with diverse audiences.

Therefore, requiring employees or applicants to speak English fluently or to speak without accent may violate Title VII.

Source:

Lippi-Green, R. (1997). *English with an accent: Language, ideology, and discrimination in the United States*. NY: Routledge.

Lenneberg, E. H. (1967). *Biological foundations of language*. NJ: Wiley

Johnson, J. S., & Newport, E. L. (1989). Critical period effects in second language learning: The influence of maturational state on the acquisition of ESL. *Cognitive Psychology*, 21 (1), 60-99.

By Valerie Bradley,
EEO Specialist DA Intern
Fort Belvoir



Frequently Asked Questions



The EEOC is responsible for enforcing Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act.

by Valerie Bradley,
EEO Specialist DA Intern
Fort Belvoir

What is Equal Employment Opportunity?

Equal Employment Opportunity is fair treatment in employment, promotion, training, and other personnel actions without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, physical or mental disability and GINA. To make sure that all Federal employees and applicants for employment with the Federal Government are provided this opportunity, certain laws and regulations were issued containing the legal basis for EEO programs in Federal agencies. EEO is for everyone: it's the LAW!

What is an EEO Complaint?

An EEO Complaint is an allegation of discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including sexual harassment), and age, physical or mental disability, and GINA. The complaint may arise from a specific personnel action, such as employment, promotion, work assignment, selection for training, disciplinary action, or separation, or it may relate to prevailing conditions in an organization.

What Do I do if I Have a Complaint?

If you feel that you have been discriminated against, as described above, first get all the facts on the matter to make sure there has been no misunderstanding. Feel free to speak with your supervisor, administrative officer or personnel representative.

If you are still dissatisfied and wish to utilize the EEO complaint system, you must bring the matter to the attention of an EEO Counselor within 45 calendar days of the occurrence of the alleged discriminatory act or effective date of the personnel action alleged to be discriminatory.

How are EEO Complaints Processed?

There are four primary phases in the EEO discrimination complaint process, informal counseling, formal complaint, hearing/appeal, and judicial process. The first phase, informal counseling, is with an agency EEO Counselor. During informal counseling the aggrieved employee and the agency have an opportunity to resolve the issues informally. The informal counseling phase is 30 calendar days, and at the end of that period, if the matter is not resolved the EEO Counselor will issue the aggrieved employee a notice to file a formal complaint.

These phases are hierarchical, meaning one phase must usually be exhausted before the next phase can be started. A complaint that does not follow this hierarchy will be remanded to an earlier phase. If specific time limits under EEOC regulations have been exceeded, your complaint may continue on to the next phase.

How much time do I have to contact an EEO Counselor?

Contact with a Counselor must be made within 45 calendar days of the date you became

aware of the alleged discrimination.

Who May File an EEO Complaint?

An aggrieved applicant, present or former employee, or group of employees may file a complaint of discrimination. The aggrieved individual has the right to be represented at all stages of the process.

Do I need a Representative?

You have the right to be accompanied and advised by a representative of your choice or an attorney, at every stage of the EEO process, as long as there is no conflict of interest or position. If you wish to be represented during the informal EEO counseling process, you must complete a notice of representation form and submit it to the appropriate EEO official.



May an agency EEO Counselor serve as a representative for an aggrieved individual at any time during the discrimination complaint process?

No. Agency EEO Counselors cannot serve as personal representatives for aggrieved individuals whose EEO matters are against the U.S. Department of Army.

Frequently Asked Questions

However, aggrieved individuals do have the right to representation of their choosing at any stage in the complaint process. EEO Counselors will provide potential complainants with instructions on their right to designate a representative.

How do I know who the EEO Counselors are?

The names and telephone numbers of EEO Counselors in your area should be posted in areas accessible to all employees, such as in break rooms or on bulletin boards. Your local EEO office contact information is also listed on the ARMY website.

How Can the Counselor Help Me?

The Counselor will listen to your problem, and advise you of your rights under the EEO complaint system. You will also be advised of the option to utilize alternative dispute resolution process (ADR). The Army's preferred method is mediation. The Counselor will make inquiry into the matter, if you wish, by discussing the problem with your supervisor, associates, personnel representative, etc. and will attempt to resolve the problem informally, acting always with your approval.

The EEO Counselor will not reveal the identity of the complainant who has come to him or her for consultation, except when authorized to do so by the complainant.

What information should I present to the EEO Counselor?

When seeking counseling you should be prepared to provide information and describe the what, when and how you were discriminated against. Be prepared to discuss what remedies could resolve the issue(s).

Why Mediate?

Mediation is direct communication in a safe environment.

Retain control of dispute, including outcome.

Parties lose no rights while participating in mediation.

Mediation is confidential. Information cannot be disclosed without permission from all parties.

Exceptions to confidentiality:
Information that is criminal in nature
Information regarding waste, fraud or abuse and/or Threats of physical harm or safety

It creates an opportunity to improve communication and working relationship.

How Does the Mediation Process Work?

The anatomy of a mediation session includes: Introductions/Opening Statements, Joint Discussion, Private Meeting (Caucus) and Closure.

Introductions/Opening Statements

The mediator opens session by introducing himself/herself, explaining mediation process and his/her role in the process.

The party initiating dispute gives opening statement **without interruption**. Explains issue from his/her perspective, how the matter affected him/her, and suggests remedies.

The other party gives his or her opening statement, also **without interruption**.

The mediator summarizes to ensure he or she has captured what the issues are.

Joint Discussion

Parties begin to communicate with each other by 1) clarifying disputed issue(s) raised in opening remarks, 2) identifying concerns behind the issue(s), 3) exploring areas of agreement and/or disagreement.

Caucus

The mediator meets separately with each party (Caucus). The Mediator or either party can call a caucus.

The reasons to have a caucus are to 1) Get more detailed information 2) Diffuse Hostility 3) Discuss Settlement Possibilities 4) Provide Reality Checks

All discussions in caucus are confidential unless the party gives permission to disclose the information.

Closure

Parties reconvene and begin to negotiate. The goal is to reach an agreement that is mutually acceptable and beneficial.



1) Parties reach agreement, reduced to writing and forwarded for review or,

2) Parties fail to reach agreement. Can continue to pursue complaint through other avenues.

Remember a mediator is not a judge who decides disputes. The parties are responsible for developing the terms of a potential agreement or that there will be no agreement.

If you have any questions relating to mediation, please do not hesitate to contact your local EEO Officer.

USAG EEO OFFICE FORT BELVOIR



Back Into History

by Valerie Bradley, EEO Specialist DA Intern



Sharlot Hall Museum/Courtesy photo
Viola Jimulla, shown here circa 1965



Viola was born on the San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation around June of 1878 and was named Sica-tuva, "Born Quickly," by her parents, Who-wah, "Singing Cricket" and Ka-hava-soo-ah, "Turquoise Bead in Nose." While attending Rice Arizona Indian School she took the name Viola and her stepfather's last name, Pelhame.

Upon the accidental death of her husband Sam "Red Ants" she became chieftess of the Yavapai Tribe in the North American West. Viola Jimulla was the first Chieftess of the Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe from 1940 until 1966. Her leadership helped the Yavapais improve living conditions, bridged the Indian and Anglo cultures and ensured continuation of tribal traditions.

Viola was a master basket-weaver using traditional Yavapai symbols representing mountains, animals, people and celestial images. One of her baskets became the official Yavapai-Prescott Indian tribal seal, which illustrates the Yavapai creation story.

She died on 7 December 1966 and is buried on the Yavapai Reservation.

Viola and Sam had five daughters. Two of her daughters, Grace Mitchell and Lucy Miller, followed in their mother's footsteps after her death and became chieftess of the tribe. In 1986, Viola Jimulla was elected to the Arizona Women's Hall of Fame.



Are Dress Codes In The Workplace Important?

As the workforce continues to be diversified and since September 2011, the issue of dress code routinely comes up as it relates to certain attire that are worn in the workplace. According to EEOC, an employer may establish a dress code, which applies to all employees or employees within certain job categories. However, there are exceptions.



An employer may require all workers to follow a uniform dress code although the dress code may conflict with some worker's ethnic beliefs or practices, a dress code must not treat some employees less favorably because of their national origin. A dress code that prohibits certain kinds of ethnic dress, such as traditional African or East Indian attire, but permits casual dress would treat some employees less favorably because of their national origin.

In the event the dress code conflicts with an employee's religious practices and the employee requests an accommodation, the employer must modify the dress code unless doing so would result in undue hardship. This rule also applies to an employee who makes an accommodation request to the dress code due to a disability.

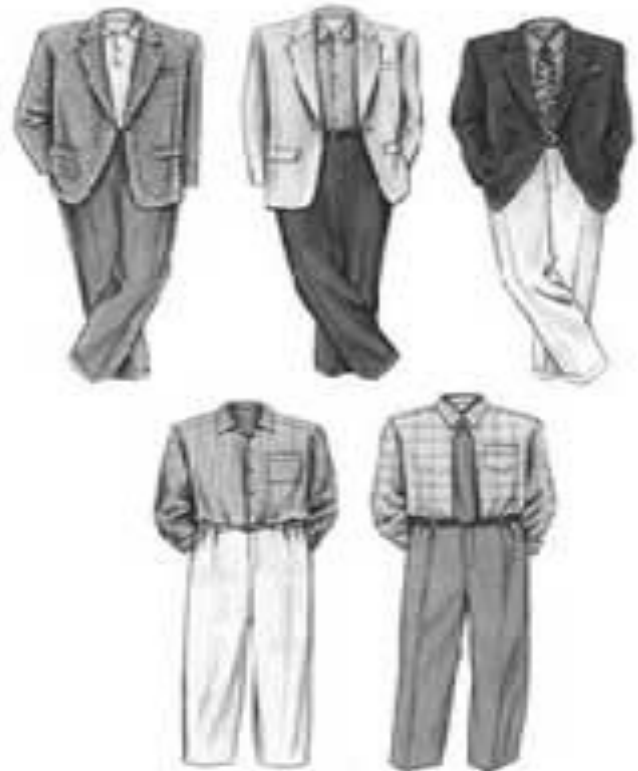
Reference: EEOC

by Beeanna Swain, EEO Specialist Fort Belvoir

Business Casual for Women



Business Casual for Men





**USAG EEO OFFICE
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**We welcome your comments and ques-
tions.**

Do you have something to say to the edi-
tors of EEO Office Fort Belvoir News
Letter?

Contact the EEO OFFICE by phone at
(703) 805-2006 or
ICE at <http://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm>

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HOLIDAYS STAFF OFF

02/20/12 President's day
05/28/12 Memorial day
07/04/12 Independence day
09/03/12 Labor day
10/08/12 Columbus day
11/12/12 Veterans 'day
11/22/12 Thanksgiving
12/25/12 Christmas

EVENTS

January 21: ML King
February 14: Black History
March 13: Women's History
April 19: Holocaust
May 15: Asian Heritage
August 26: Women Equality
September 15 to October 15:
Hispanic Heritage Month
October 1 –15:
Disability Awareness
November 7: Native American



Don't Miss